



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

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Manitowoc County Aging and Disability Resource Center Receives Falls Prevention Grant

MADISON – The Department of Health and Family Services has awarded \$273,075 to the Manitowoc County Aging and Disability Resource Center to expand a falls prevention program in Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Grant counties.

“Falling is a real hazard for older people, but many falls can be prevented,” said Secretary Helene Nelson. “We’re glad to see that these counties are working together to help increase physical activity for seniors and create prevention plans that will also reduce hazards that can cause falls.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one-third of adults ages 65 years and older fall each year. Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.

Seniors can help reduce their risk of falling by increasing their lower body strength and improving balance through regular physical activity. They should also ask their doctor or pharmacist to review all their medicines to reduce side effects and interactions, which may also lead to a fall. To make living areas safer, seniors should:

- Remove tripping hazards such as throw rugs and clutter in walkways
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors
- Have grab bars put in next to the toilet and in the tub or shower
- Have handrails put in on both sides of stairways
- Improve lighting throughout the home.

The Manitowoc Aging and Disability Resource Centers is an innovative component in Governor Doyle’s efforts to improve the state’s long term care system. The centers provide the public with information, options and advice about long-term care for persons with chronic illness or disability, such as Family Care. ADRCs also serve as the first step in making Family Care expansion a reality.

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Family Care allows seniors and people with disabilities the choice to receive long-term care services in their own homes and communities. The program provides an entitlement to long-term care, using Medicaid dollars flexibly and not just earmarking dollars for nursing home care. In January, Governor Doyle set a goal of expanding the innovative Family Care program statewide within five years and eliminating all wait lists for long-term care services. Currently, about 11,500 people are on waitlists statewide.

There are Aging and Disability Resource Centers operating in Barron, Brown, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green, Jackson, Kenosha, La Crosse, Manitowoc, Marathon, Milwaukee, Outagamie/Calumet/Waupaca, Portage, Richland and Trempealeau counties.

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